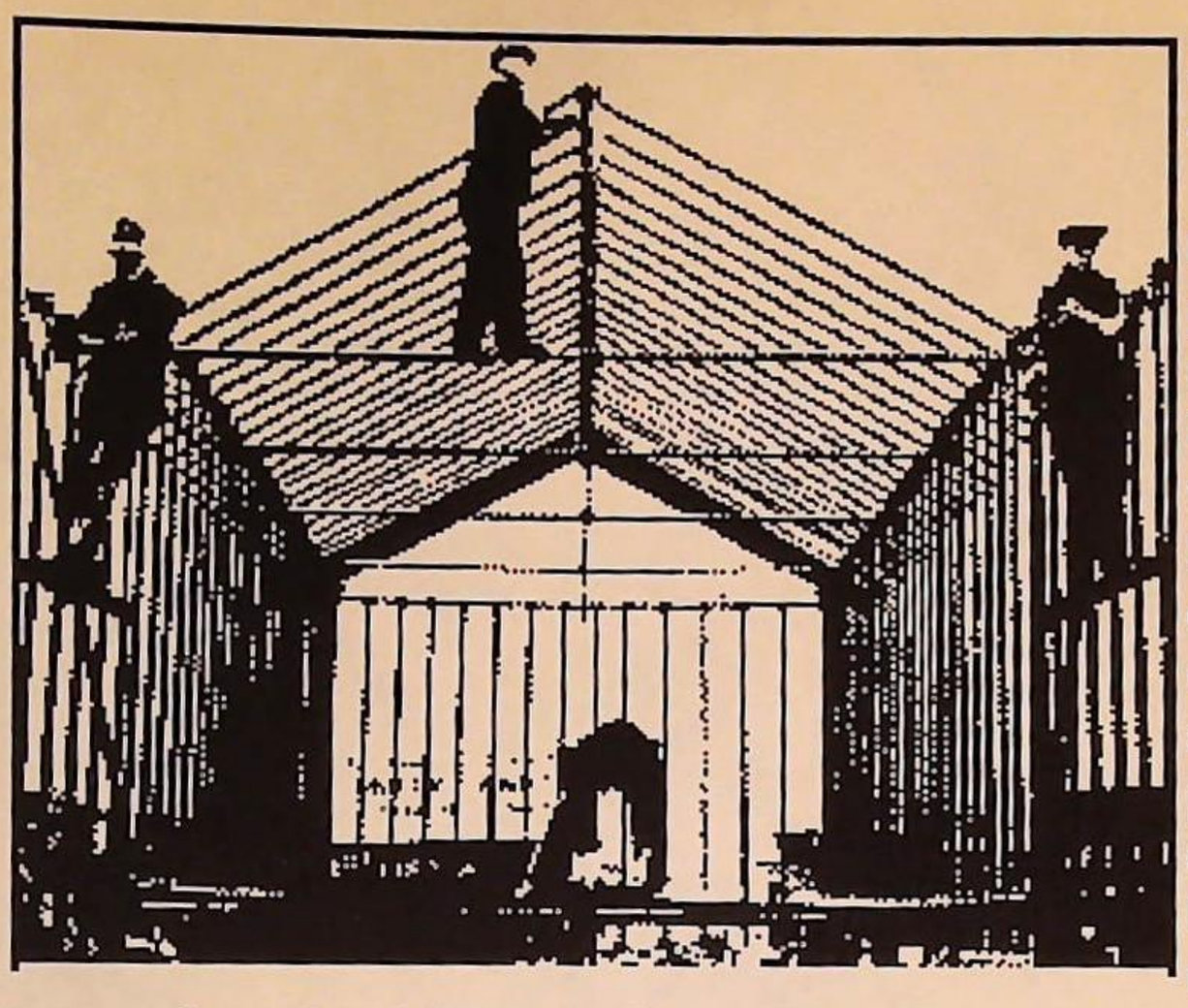
Searching for Nessie

Although Nessie was sighted as far back as the 6th century a.d. it is modern day sightings that have captured the public imagination.

In the early part of the 1930's a new road was built around Loch Ness which in turn brought in a spate of new sightings from road users an sightseers. Up until this time stories of the monster circulated more within the local community but talk of other sightings were spreadir outwith the village.

The first recorded sighting of Nessie on land was made by Mr Spicer a his wife, on July 22nd 1933, who were driving down the road between the Loch Ness side villages of Dores and Inverfarigaig. They caught sight of a large cumbersome animal crossing the road ahead, which w some 20 yards from the water. They first saw a long neck, forming a number of arches, a little thicker than a elephant's trunk and a huge lumbering body heading towards the Loch. It disappered into the bush out of sight. After this sighting reports flooded in and interest grew an international scale. Speculators offered huge prizes for the anima dead or alive. Circus owner Bertram Mills promised a sum of £20,000



any man who could bring the creature alive to his circus.

Probably one of the first photographs to be taken of the monster was snapped by a British Aluminium Company worker, Mr Hugh Gray, near Foyers. It showed a writhing creature creating a considerable disturbance on the surface of the Loch. He only saw part of the animal which he estimated to be around 40 ft long, which included a thick rounded back and also a muscular looking tail.

In December of the same year a hippo's foot had been planted by a prankster and all was taken seriously until officials finally uncovered the truth. This had an affect on future reports of sightings, as they were taken less seriously.But still reported sightings were becoming increasingly common and more intriging.

On the 5th of January, 1934, a motorcyclist almost collided with the monster as he was returning home from Inverness. It was around 1a.m and was bright due to the moonlight. As Mr Grant approached Abriachan on the north-eastern shore of the Loch he saw a large shape loom on the right side of the road. As he approached the object he saw a small head attached to a long neck. The animal saw Grant and promptly crossed the road back down to the Loch. Mr Grant, by this time, had jumped off his motorbike and followed the path it took to the Loch only to see the rippling water where the creature had entered. In April,1934 the most famous photograph was obtained by a London surgeon as he heading towards Inverness along the new road.

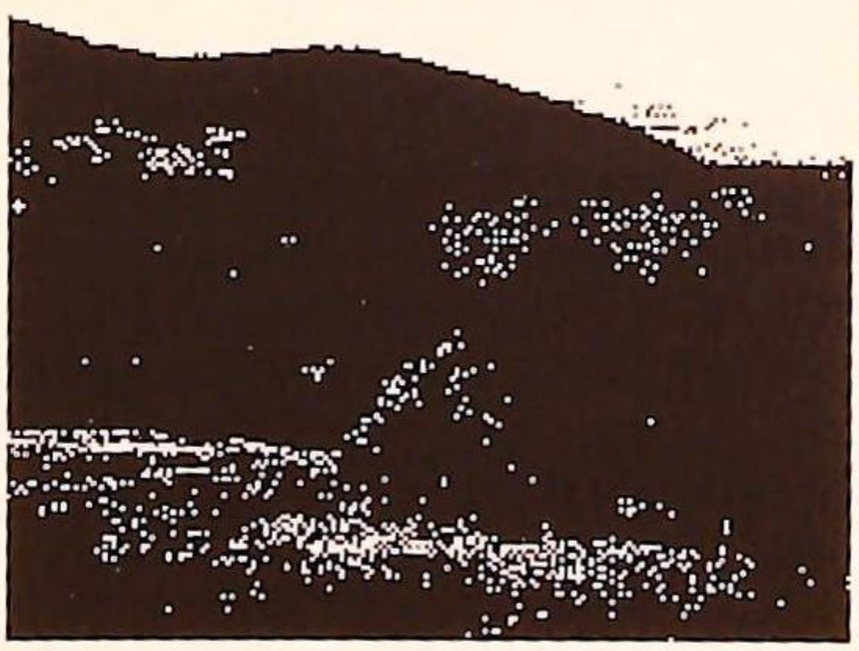
The Surgeon's picture. This photograph has since provec

This event encouraged more people to come forward with their tales sightings.

An event on the 5th of June, 1934 was considered to be of importance but was not widely publicised. It involved a young girl from the Fort Augustus area who was employed as a maid in a large house close to abbey. It was about 6:30 a.m., the maid was looking out of a window down the Loch. She saw on the shore, ' one of the biggest animals she had seen in her life, ' at a range of about 200 yards. Her description w similar to those of others, giraffe like neck, small head, skin like an elephant and two very short fore legs or flippers. She watched it for around 20 mins when it re-entered the water and disappeared.

There were a number of privately funded investigations, most of whi were not successful, which took place in the same year. There was on such expedition which did have a degree of success. It was led by a S Edward Mountain in July, 1934. During that period of research and investigation he obtained five still pictures of the monster, he had observed the monster, along with members of his team, and had actu filmed the monster. It was probably because the expedition was so w funded that a result was most likely and that a poorly funded investigation would be doomed to failure.

As the threat of war with Germany grew stronger, Nessie and all the sightings were furthest things from peoples minds, but there were s recorded sightings and even a number of photographs were taken. During the war Loch Ness was in control of the Navy and the loch area was secured. This did not stc the monster from making itself known. In May, 1943, a Mr C.B. Farrel of the Royal Observer Corps was on duty to warn of incoming enemy bombers but instead observed the movements of the monster at a distance of 250 yards. He saw 20-30 ft o the monster's body and the neck which was approximately 4-5ft above the surface of the water. The eyes, he explained, were large and the body of the monster appeared to have a 'fin'. It finally submerged without a movement on the water.



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30th April 1997

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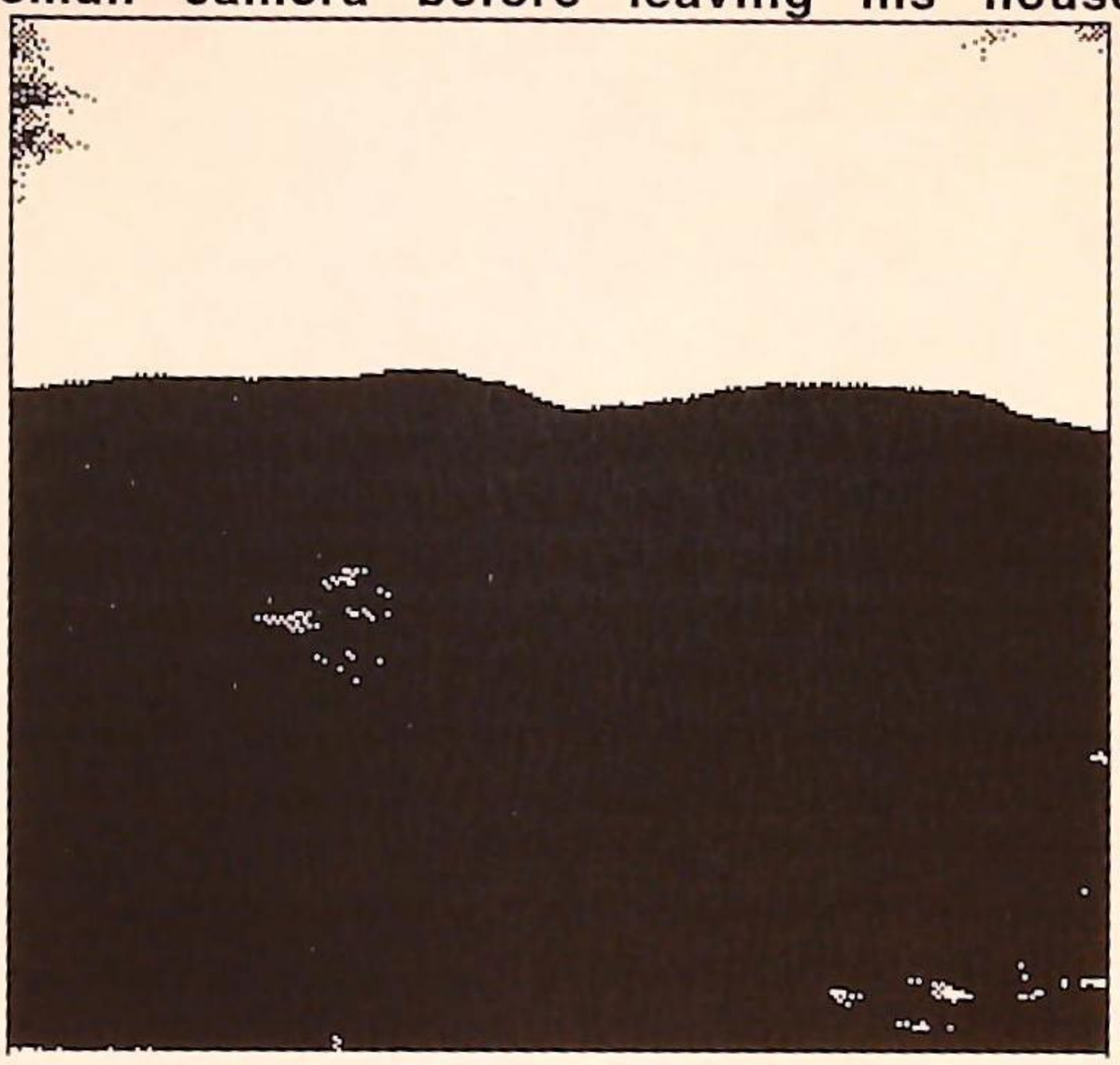
When the war was over and up until the late '50's sightings of Nessie continued as people got back onto the road with their motorcars on t Loch side road. The monster was still a local source of interest but remained the complete enigma.

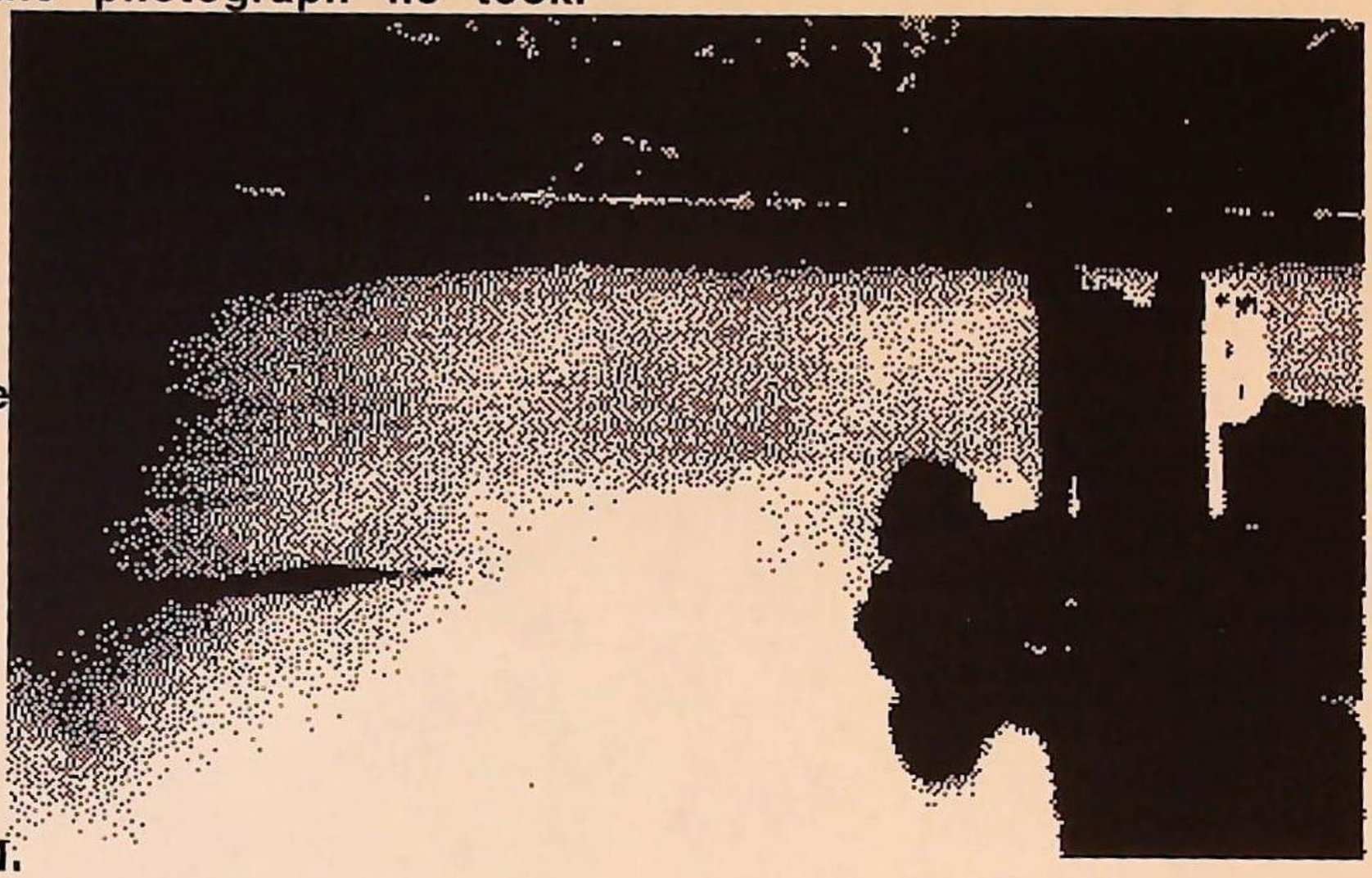
In 1951 a new photograph appeared which to some confirmed the existence of the monster. On the 14th of July at around 6:30 a.m. Mr Lachlan Stewart, a woodcutter employed by the forestry commission, saw something large moving out on the Loch. With a friend he ran to t waters edge and there about 50 yards away they saw three humps, eac about 5 ft long moving at fast speed. Mr Stewart ,who had picked up a small camera before leaving his house, took this photograph. Seconds later a small head and long neck appeared in front of the first hump then the monster turned out towards the centre of the Loch and with a lot of splashing swam off and sinking head first 300 yards offshore, disappeared. Mr Stewart estimated the length of head and neck to be 6 ft, and then 15-20 ft behind the last hump he noticed a commotion in the water suggesting the movement of the tail.



In December 1954 another 'sighting' was made by a Peterhead fishing drifter called 'Rival III'. The vessel captured an unusual graphical recording of a large object at a depth of around 480 ft - 100 ft or so above the bottom - which kept pace with the boa for half a mile then disappeared.

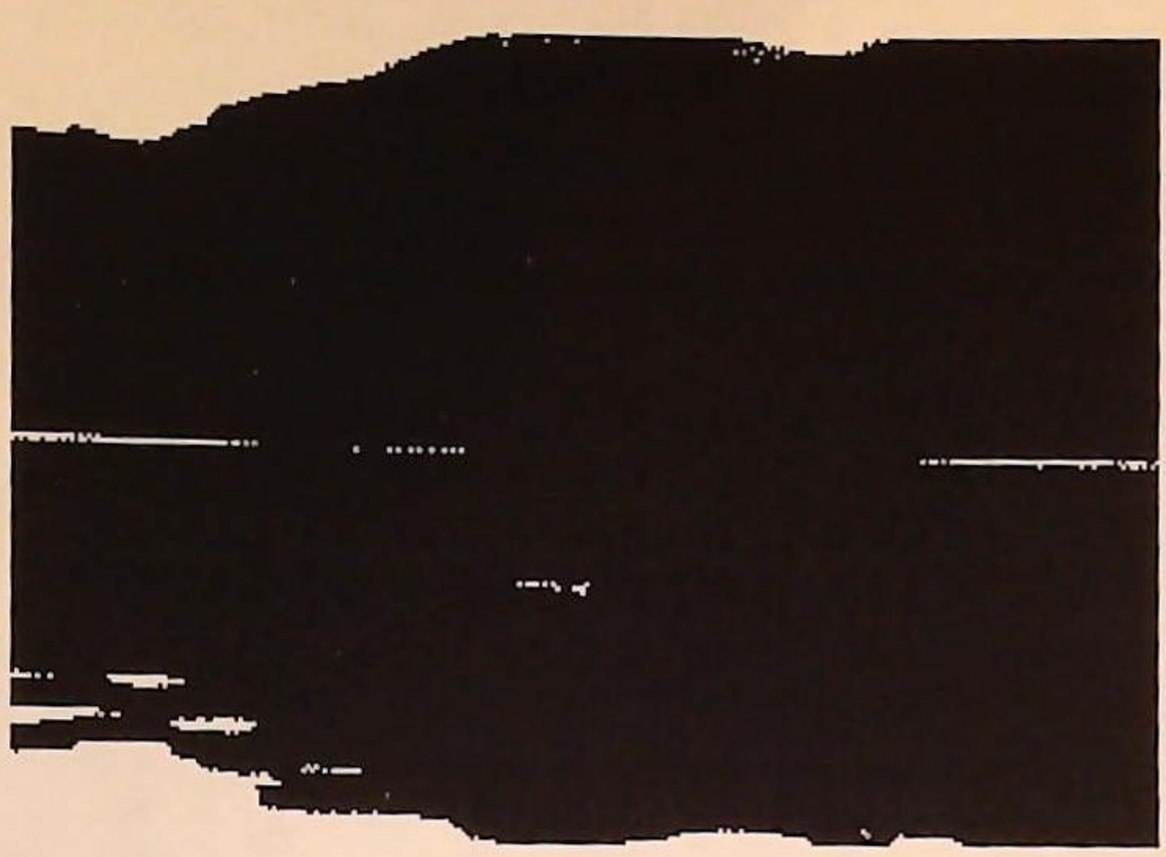
Another eyewitness account happened in October 1955, by Colonel Patrick Grant of Knockie Estate. He was travelling from Fort Augustu to Invermoriston and nearing Inchnacardoch Bay he saw a great commotion in the water between 100-200 yards from the road. He brought his car to a stop and could see a black object above the surfa 10 or 15 ft long. In less than a minute the object suddenly started swimming eastwards, parallel with the shore and very near the surfa though submerged. Moving at great speed it travelled 200-300 yards a disappeared completely.

1955 brought one of the most intriguing photograph ever taken. Peter Macnab from Aryshire was having having a holiday in the Highlands an was preparing to take a photograph of Urquhart Castle. His attention was drawn to his left where he saw an enormous dark animal with tw humps. This is the photograph he took.



Spring 1958. The proprietor of The Foyers Hotel, Mr Hugh Rowand, his wife and two friends were seated in their garden overlooking Loch Ness when his eye caught a stationary fin shaped object in the water near Sand Point. A few seconds elapsed and the object sprang into lif and shot across the Loch towards Drumnadrochit. Mr Rowand guessed speed to be in the region of 20-25 knots.

A Mr H.L. Cockrell of Dumfries, Scotland, had a remarkable experience with the monster in the Autumn of 1958 when he met it in his canoe c the Loch. Mr Cockrell being an expert seaman and familiar with small crafts had developed a waterproof camera with flash equipment whic he used from his canoe. The camera was strapped to his head like a



miner's lamp and activated by the movement of his mouth which left his hands free to paddle. He was boating about dawn on the Loch when something appeared about 50 yards away. It looked like it kad a large flat head 4 or 5 feet long and about 3 feet to the rear of this he noticed another thin line, all very low in the water. He swung round to approach what ever it was and to his great horror it turned towards him. He took a shot with his camera and kept moving towards it and to his relief the creature turned to another direction. When the film was developed , although i showed the Loch to be calm, there was a great deal of disturbance on part of the surface of the water.

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The day after Mr Cockrell's sighting the monster was seen by a Mr Brown and his wife from Invergordon in the same place but closer to shore. They described it as three thick black humps moving through t water with 50 ft ahead of the humps a movement which seemed to suggest a head.

A member of the Northern Naturalists Organisations, Mr Peter O'Conn from Gateshead, Durham had a sighting on the 24th May,1960. From the garden of the Foyers Hotel he and a number of other people saw the creature at around 4 o'clock in the afternoon. At first he thought it v a rowing boat about 200 yards from the Foyers shore but using his fi glasses he could see a brown coloured object which was slowly sinkir

Mr O'Connor encountered the monster yet again 3 days later on the 27th of May, 1960. Between 6 and 6:30 a.m. he went for a walk along the shore beside Foyers Bay and the monster glided into view around the headland. He waded into the water up to his waist to get a closer view. It features were sma and sheep-like and a very, very strong neck. It's skin appeared smooth, very like a seal. He turned to yell to his companion and then turned back and took this photograph, to the right, as it disappeared into the turbulence it had created.

Generally regarded to be the first major scientifically planned expedition of its kind to visit the Loch was conducted on the 27th Ju to 23rd July 1960 by The Universities (Oxford and Cambridge) Expedition. The purpose being to make a general study of Loch Ness, paying particular attention to the possible existance of the Loch Nes Monster. Participant in the expedition numbered 30 volunteer graduat and under graduates who used cameras and an echo sounder mounted or boat. They did encounter one visual sighting of what appeared to be tl monsters back moving through the water. Another sighting they had v of an object that continuously changed shape on the surface of the water. Numerous echo soundings were taken which were of unusual character.

A sighting was reported on 7th August 1960 by a witness who wished remain anonymous. The witness was driving south-westerly along the main road towards Abriachan pier when he noticed a small yacht travelling up the Loch. He then realised there were two V wakes parallel to one another. The closest of the two wakes came from the yacht and the second appeared to be caused by something just under t water. The object surfaced and looked just like a midget submarine without its periscope. The colour was greenish black, about the size the yacht, which was in fact 48ft by 10 ft.

Going on a number of years, this sighting occured on the 13th July 19 by Paul H. Biermasz who was on holiday in the Loch Ness area. This is Biermaszs' own account of his sighting. In July 1979 I had a Nessie sighting that goes as follows :
I was driving from the camp site where I was staying at Invermoristc north to Inverness on the main road when a few miles after Urquhart Bay, passing a layby with a good Loch view, I saw 'It'. 'It' was at a distance of some 200-300 metres, shaped like an upside-down (black) rowing boat, speeding away from the shore. The speed was remarkable because of the wave 'it' produced. Other people must have seen 'it', a sailing boat crew might have spotted something as 'it' was coming t way. A touring bus was in front of me and crossed the road to pull in the layby. Passengers in the rear of the bus were pointing at the Loch also. Everything happened in seconds. The time of this sighting was between 10 and 11 a.m.. The sky was cloudy but the Loch could be clearly seen and the wind was very low. Back in Holland the story of sighting was not believed so I have kept quiet about until now.

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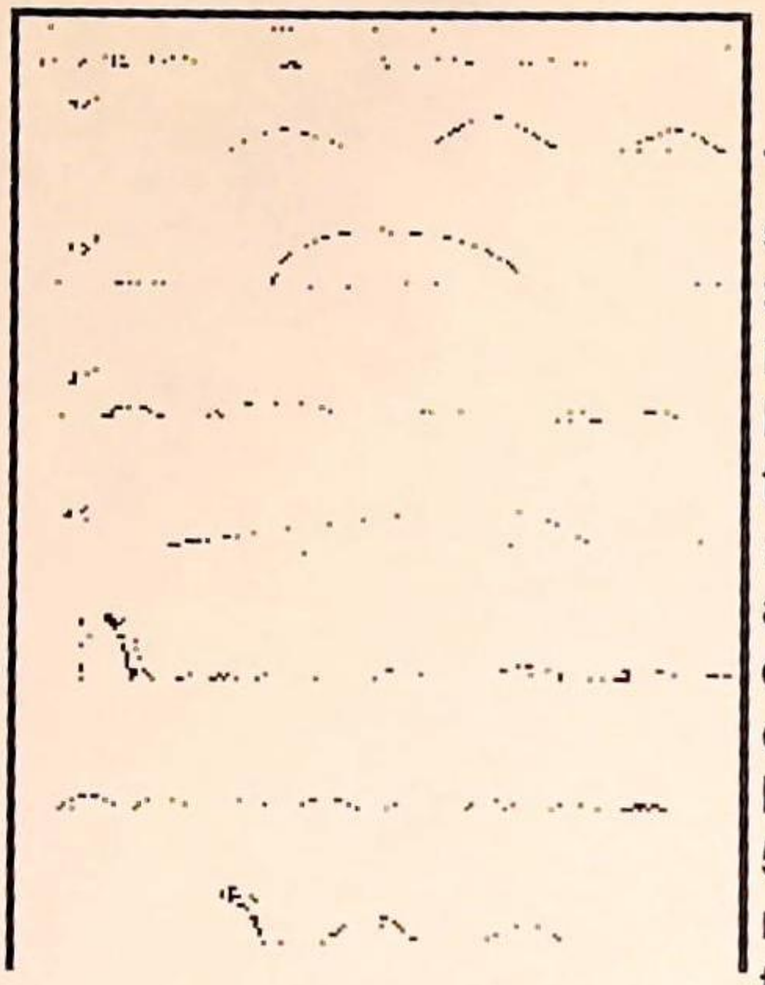
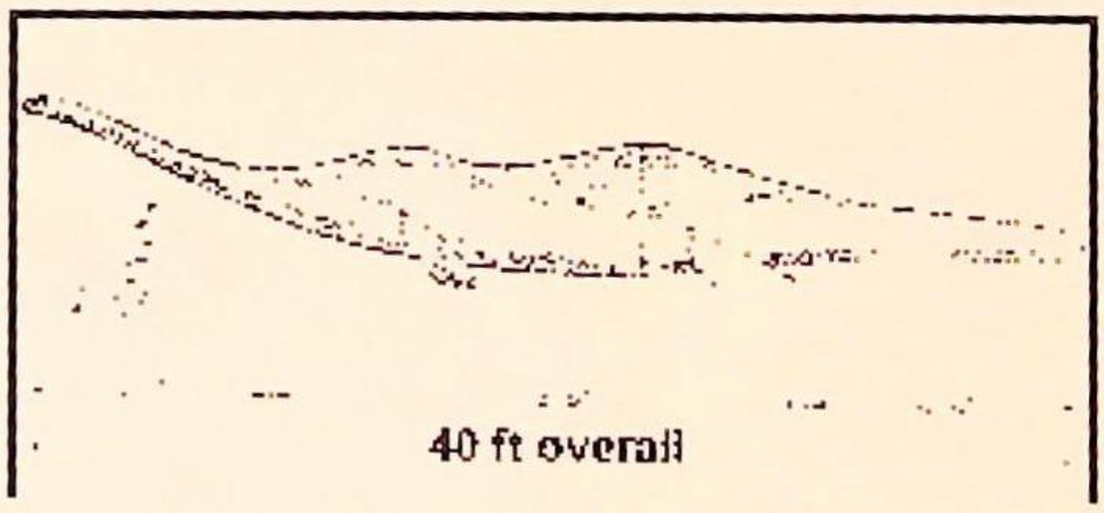
Drawings and Opinions

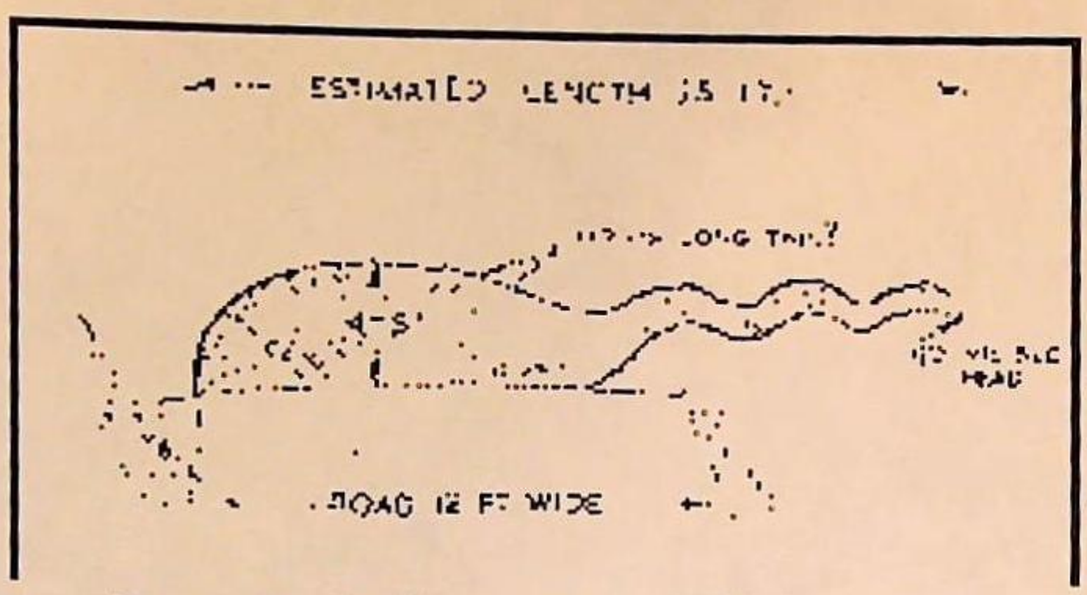
Below you will find other evidence which people have put foward ove the years. This includes drawings, sketches and facts as told by themselves.



This drawing shows various body shapes sketched by different observers. Statistics : In 20% of sighting a back or body is reported as distinct from the appearance o humps, and the most common description is that of 'an upturned boat', but others have sai : "It looked like an elephants back - stood about 4ft high and 10-12ft in length - an egg-shaped body - seen end on there is a distinct angle at apex of back - a long dark body - like a gigantic eel 25ft in length and 5ft in diameter." description such as these ar not very specific and the best that can be sai for them is that the majority refer to some very large object.



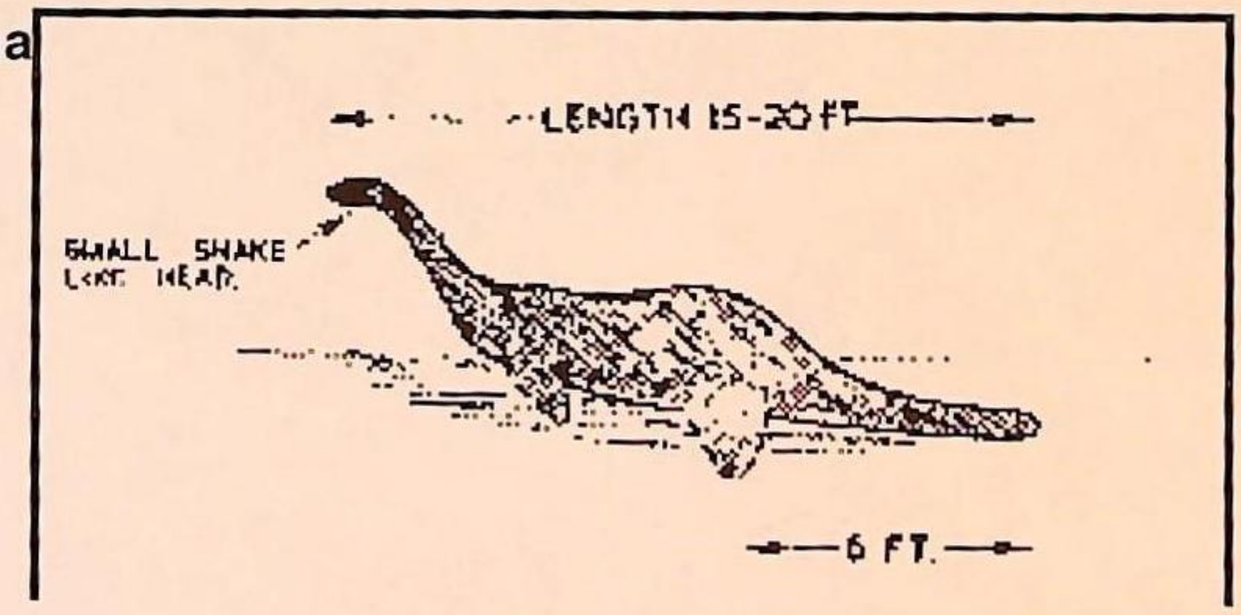
This one is an impression of the monster based on average statistics showing the 2 humps most commonly reported. Statistics : "Humps" appear in no less of 45% of sightings, but these must be sub-divided because the number of humps vary in quite an extraordinary manner. From amongs 45 separate statements, 8 refer to 1 hump, 19 to 2 humps, 9 to 3 hump and the remainder to a varied number of humps or 'coils' up to a coun total of 12. Generally speaking, there appear to be 3 basic triangular humps, the largest in the middle, standing 3 to 4ft above the surface, 5-6ft inlength at the waterline, and separated by 6-8ft of clear wate from the other 2 humps. This adds up to an overall visible length of 30ft or so. In all the hundred reports no one has ever referred to a hu as a fin. Probably the only certain thing about them is that they are most peculiar, and a complete stumbling block to science.



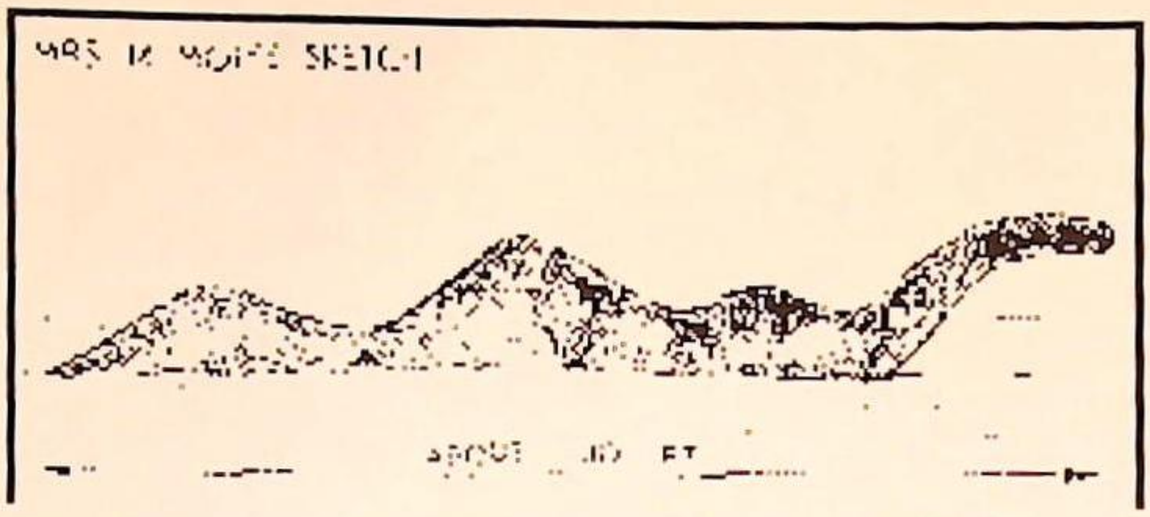
This is a drawing of the animal described by Mr and Mrs Spicer seen crossing the road near Dores in 1933.

On the 22nd of July 1933 a most extraordinary thing happened, so extraordinary it taxed the imagination of even the most confirmed believers. Driving down the narrow road, early one morning between the village of Dores and Inverfarigaig, Mr Spicer and his wife saw 'a most extraordinary form of animal' crossing the road ahead ; which at this point lay some 20 yards from the water. First a long ne appeared, undulating rapidly, forming a number of arches. It was a li thicker than an elephants trunk and stretched the width of the road, behind it a huge ponderous body, lurched againly towards the Loch. In seconds it crossed the road, and disappeared through the bushes out sight. The Spicers ; at first some 200 yards distant, accelerated towards it, but when they arrived there was nothing to see, just a ga in the undergrowth through which the creature must of passed. They heard no splash, but the noise of the car engine might well of drowne it ; neither did they see any limbs, but the creature's lower extremi were obscured by a dip in the road, which at this place was some 10-12ft in width. The animals body was about 4ft high and together with the neck, about 25ft in length. Staggered and curiously repelled what they had seen the Spicers withstood the barrage of questions levelled at them after the event by various interested people.

This is a drawing of the anima seen by Mr Grant near Abriachan, on the 5th of January 1934.



For more details of this sighting see 'Searching for Nessie'



This sketch was done by a Mrs Moir of Inverness. The sighting occured in October 1936. Mrs Moirs statement is as follows :

One October afternoon a friend took my sister, mother-in-law, my young daughter and myself for a little trip by car to Foyers. On th return journey, at a place where the road runs very close to the Loch, about 3 miles from Foyers, my sister suddenly shouted, "Look, there's the Monster". We all got out of the car and ran to the waters edge. There, before us , at a distance of 1/3 of the width of the Loch away from us was this wonderful creature. It was a perfect view, if we had camera the most convincing picture of the Monster ever taken could have been obtained, but alas! we had neither camera or binoculars. It was a perfect setting. There were three distinct humps, a long slende neck ending in a small head, and the overall length appeared to be 30f approximately. I could see no details of eyes, mouth etc. but the outl was all beautifully clear - the three humps, head and neck. The middle hump was the highest, the one behind the neck was smaller and the in between size was at the back, sloping in a graceful line down to, and under, the water. The creature was quite stationary and it often dippe it's head into the water either feeding or amusing its self. We watche in awe and amazement, for about 5-8mins; then suddenly it swung rou away from the shore, and shot across the Loch at a terrific speed, putting up a wash. All the time I could see a small dark spot, perhaps the highest hump, perhaps the head. When it eventually came to rest I noticed the *humps had disappeared* ; the back was now more or less straightened out, but the neck and head were as before. The creature was in full view for 14mins. I have no idea how much of the body was underneath the water, but what we saw was a huge creature, evidently very powerful, graceful and quite at ease on and in the water. A thrilling experience - I actually saw the Loch Ness Monster, resting, and travelling at speed, I saw the humps, then the straightened out back.

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Drawings and Opinions

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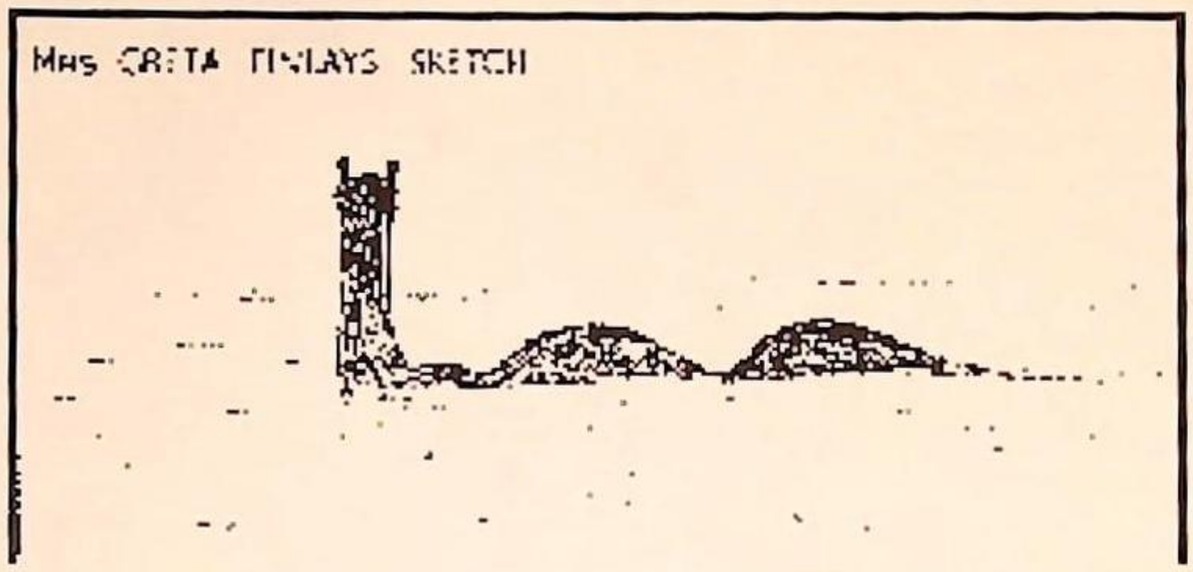
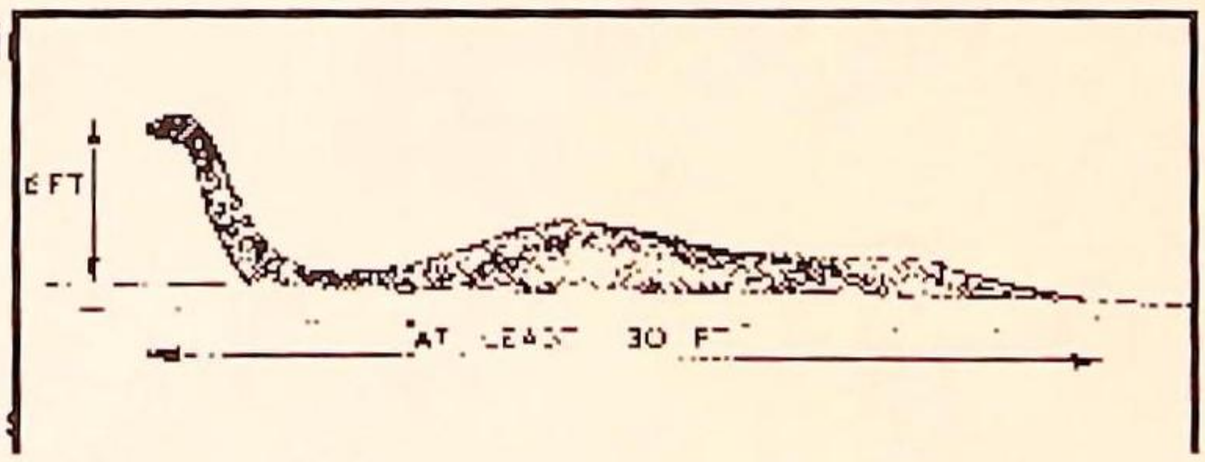


This drawing was done by the son of a Mrs Finlay from Inverness, 1952. Mrs Finlay a resident of Inverness, and her small son happened to be near the north-east shore of the Loch near to Aldourie Pier off Tor Point, when the monster appeared quite literally a few yards away in the water. She said she could of hit it with a pebble.

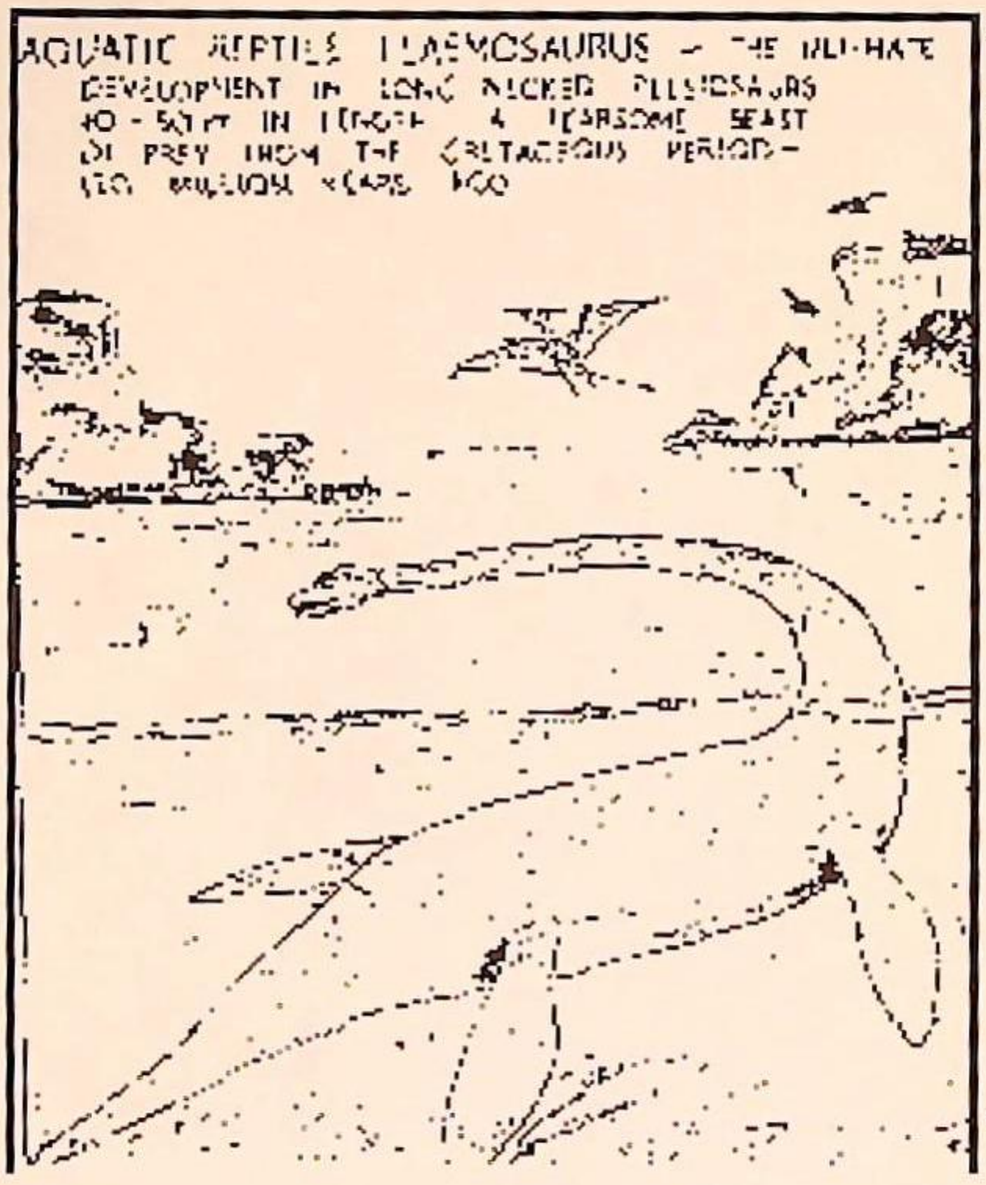
"I was sitting outside the caravan when i heard a continual splashing the water. After several moments past and realising this was not the usual wash from a boat I walked round. To my surprise I saw what I believe to be the Loch Ness Monster. My son and I stood looking at thi creature in amazement. Although I was terrified, we stood and watche until it submerged, which it did very quickly causing waves to break the shore . We had an excellent view as it was so close to the shore. skin was dark in colour and looked very tough. The neck was long and held erect. The head was about the same width as the neck. There were 2 projections from it, each with a blob on the end. This was not a pleasant experience. I certainly never want to see the monster again."

This drawing is of a sighting i 1934.



In May 1934 Mr Alexander Campbell, a water bailiff for over 40 years at Loch Ness had sighting of the monster. He wa standing at the mouth of the River Oich one beautiful morning in May gazing across the Loch in the direction of Borlum Bay. His attention was drawn to a strange object that seemed to shoot out of the calm waters almost opposite the Abb boathouse. His description as shown in his sketch, is of a swanlike n reaching 6ft or so above the water at its highest point, and the body, darkish grey glistening with moisture was *at least* 30ft long. He gauc this carefully in his minds eye by placing 2 ordinary rowing boats of 15ft overall length end to end, and he didn't think he was far wrong

with size. Watching and wondering if he had time to run for his came he heard the noise of the engines of 2 trawlers which were proceedin down the lower basin of the Caledonian Canal, which enters the Loch almost along side the Abbey boathouse. The animal certainly must of heard, or sensed, the approach of these vessels too, for he saw it turi its head in an apprehensive way, this way and that, and, apparently being timid, it then sank rapidly out of sight, lowering the neck in d so and leaving a considerable disturbance on the mirror-like surface the Loch. He said the animal would hve been some 400 yards from whe he stood, possibly less, and he had a very clear view of it which last several minutes.


AQUATIC REPTILE ELASMOSAURUS – THE ULTIMATE
DEVELOPMENT IN LONG NECKED PLESIOSAURS
40 - 50 FT IN LENGTH A FEARSOME BEAST
OF PREY FROM THE CRETACEOUS PERIOD –
120 MILLION YEARS AGO

This is a sketch of a possible ancestor of the Loch Ness Monster an Elasmosaurus(Plesiosaurs).

The picture on the right is the skeleton of a Plesiosaur, extinct for 70 million years.

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